

Announcing: Veterans for Peace 12th Annual College Scholarship Program for Alachua County Students
Deadline for Submitting Application, Friday, April 17, 2026

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Gainesville Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 announces our 12th annual Peace Scholarship Program for the spring of 2026. We will be awarding college or vocational education scholarships of \$1,500 each for high school seniors, college students or adults. Recipients must demonstrate commitment to one or more areas of social change activities which may include: peace and nonviolence, intersectional coalition building, Black Lives Matter, women's reproductive freedom, environmental sustainability, immigration, labor, education and social change.

Gainesville Veterans for Peace created these scholarships to give financial support to students in Alachua County, Florida who are planning careers in pursuit of a world of social justice and equality. Students enrolled in vocational, apprenticeship and career training programs are eligible to apply.

Mariana Castro, then a University of Florida student, was a recipient of a 2016 Peace Scholarship. In explaining the impact of the award, Mariana noted, "To me receiving the Veterans for Peace Scholarship meant that there are people in our community who truly believe in helping change and shape our society for the betterment of all. There are not many scholarships such as VFP Peace Scholarship because work for social justice is often overlooked in our world."

Mariana writes: "It's tough being a college student and fighting for your community and overall peace. We don't get graded for our movement-building work, and we don't get graded for our campaigns. As an immigrant advocate and social justice activist I feel blessed to have received this opportunity that will help me continue with my college education." Ms. Castro's narrative is an important reminder that while we often say, "Another World is Possible," we must provide tangible alternative funding to people who want to pursue peace and social justice in a society that is heavily based on funding war and violence.

Please help Gainesville Veterans for Peace spread the word about this scholarship program! To be eligible to apply for the Peace Scholarship, the applicant must be: 1) a resident of Alachua County; 2) either a high school senior planning to enroll in full-time undergraduate study at an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school or apprenticeship program in the United States for the 2026-2027 academic year. Or: 2) a student currently enrolled in one of these programs and in good standing; or: 3) an adult student enrolling in higher education who needs financial assistance.

Peace Scholarship applicants will also be asked to provide a brief personal statement and evidence of leadership and/or personal initiative in activities in an organization (including

volunteer or paid work) relating to peace and social justice, community organizing and/or nonviolence. Applicants will also need to provide two letters of recommendation.

PEACE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application (PDF file) must be downloaded from the Gainesville Veterans for Peace website, <https://vfpgainesville.org/> The completed application should be emailed to:

Paul Ortiz,
ortizprof@gmail.com,

With the Following Subject line: Veterans for Peace Scholarship Program

The email and/or postmarked deadline for the scholarship application is April 17, 2026. Peace Scholarship recipients will be announced during the first week of May. For questions about the Peace Scholarship, contact Paul Ortiz at: ortizprof@gmail.com or 831-334-0131. The full announcement and instructions for applying will soon be posted on our web site, at <http://www.vfpgainesville.org/>